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ID RESOURCES: DEFORESTATION

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ciples submitted by the United States of America

Proposal on Forest Prin proposed principles and related actions that might
g consensus on the elements of a global convention
Attached are a set of aken together, the principles and related actions
form the basis for reaching nternational framework for nationally-based actions.
or agreement on forests.
could serve to provide an es" are meant to define the nature and structure of
s the "specific principles" identify areas of forest
The "general principle ed on the principles, countries would be free to
a forest agreement, whereas and take beneficial actions best suited to local
policy and management. Ba actions listed are illustrative of such
develop national strategie t might be taken.
conditions. The potential
implementation actions tha

I. PRINCIPLES FOR A GLOBAL FOREST CONVENTION/AGREEMENT

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Global stewardship

Countries have a responsibility to engage in cooperative stewardship to improve global environmental quality for mutual benefit. They also have a sovereign right to manage their domestic natural resources pursuant to their domestic policies. Global stewardship and sustainable development depend upon the integration of healthy environmental quality and robust economic growth.

2. Global participation

Improvements in the management of forest resources will have global benefits. All countries share an interest in promoting such benefits, and all should share in efforts to achieve them.

3. International cooperation

Countries should be encouraged to realize their shared forestry goals through cooperative international arrangements. Such arrangements to improve forest resource management could include provision of education and training, research and monitoring, forest management planning expertise and financial and technical assistance.

4. Comprehensive coverage

All types of forests - boreal, temperate and tropical - and all types of global forest benefits, including economic, environmental, social and cultural - should be addressed in an agreement. This includes attention to the sustainable use of forests for, inter alia, forest products, biodiversity, greenhouse gas sequestration and indigenous peoples.

5. Flexible, performance-based approach

Progress on forestry should be measured by the results obtained, to allow maximum scope for creative, diverse, innovative and cost-effective policies that contribute to global forest benefits. Policies and practices should be flexible and able to respond to changing circumstances and new information. Countries should be able to pursue results through their own choices of specific forest management practices, both to respect the autonomy of sovereign States and to enhance the cost-effectiveness and dynamism of policies by allowing them to match local needs and opportunities.

6. Use of market mechanisms

To enhance flexibility and effectiveness, the use of market forces and mechanisms to achieve forestry goals should be encouraged, both domestically and internationally.

7. Integration of policies

Policies should comport with forestry objectives in such areas as economics and trade (including taxes, subsidies and tariffs), financial and technical assistance, and property rights and land tenure.

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PARTICULAR FOREST CONCERNS

8. Sustainable management

Promote sustainable management and stewardship of forests to meet present and future human needs for economic and ecological services. Act cooperatively for sustainable development combining healthy environmental quality and robust economic growth. Reduce adverse effects on forests by improving the efficiency of using land resources to meet human needs.

9. Conservation of forest diversity

Endeavour to conserve, maintain, restore and enhance the biological diversity of forested ecosystems, including genetic, species, ecosystems and landscape diversity.

10. Reforestation and rehabilitation

Strive to maintain and increase the total quantity and quality of forests to the extent economically and environmentally justified and appropriate.

11. Climate change

Seek to expand the use of forests as sinks and reservoirs for greenhouse gases, and endeavour to help forests adapt to potential climate change and changing atmospheric composition.

12. Air pollution

Seek appropriate actions to address the adverse effects of air pollution on forest growth and productivity wherever economically and environmentally justified.

13. Indigenous peoples and established local communities

Respect the needs of indigenous peoples who use forests as the basis for their livelihood, social organization or cultural identity. Recognize the need of established local communities which depend upon forest resources to have an economic stake in sustainable forest use. Raise local community awareness of the effects of their actions on forests and promote compatibility of their actions with attainment of forest management objectives.

14. Fuelwood and energy

Find means to meet the demands for fuel for cooking, heating and other energy while avoiding deforestation and degradation of forests.

15. Economics and trade

Integrate sustainable forest use objectives and policies with economic and trade policies. Harness market forces to achieve national, regional and international forest management goals. Foster use of debt-for-nature swaps and other innovative means.

16. Research and inventory

Expand forestry research, inventory and monitoring of the biological, physical, social, economic and other key variables that affect or are components of forest resources, forest ecosystems and forest use to meet multiple objectives.

17. Education and training

Strengthen institutional capabilities, improve education in the science, technology and economics of forests and forest management, and ensure full public access to information and public input to the decision-making processes related to forest management.

18. Financial and technical assistance

Use financial and technical assistance resources fully and efficiently to help countries implement national, regional and international forestry programmes aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of forests. Ensure that development assistance is consistent with sound forest use and stewardship.

II. POTENTIAL ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT PRINCIPLES OF A GLOBAL FOREST CONVENTION/AGREEMENT

A. What kinds of actions would be appropriate for a framework convention/agreement?

1. A framework convention or agreement on global forests should establish general obligations for the parties. The framework agreement could appropriately include:

(a) Development of and means to provide the scientific, technological, and economic knowledge needed as the basis for continuing international discussion and cooperation;

(b) General obligations for participants to support the principles of the agreement in ways suitable to their circumstances;

(c) Appropriate institutions to facilitate continuing scientific, technological and economic assessment, cooperative research, and general obligations;

(d) Provision for any subsequent protocols for which the scientific and other assessments may show a need.

Inventory and research

2. An adequate base of scientific, technological and economic knowledge and data about the world's forests is needed, both to support continuing international discussion and cooperation under an agreement and to provide the basis for improved forest management. A cooperative international programme could assess the current inventory and status of forest resources, future trends, and the status of non-forest uses which put pressure on forest resources.

3. Further research is needed in a number of areas, including the biological, physical, social and economic components of forest resources and ecosystems. Examples of areas needing further research include the measurement of multiple benefits, gaining a better understanding of key or leverage variables which affect forests, improving strategies for sound management, and better understanding of causes and alternatives to forest clearing.

Education and training

4. Countries with forest resources need to have the scientific and technical human resource capabilities to manage their forests effectively. Countries with expertise in forest management can help build these human and institutional capabilities. Because improved forest management can improve local economic performance at the same time that it delivers global forest benefits, providing education and training can serve the interests of both groups of countries.

Strategies for improving forest management

5. Countries could undertake, as a general obligation under an agreement, to develop and publish explicit national strategies for improving forest management.

6. Bilateral and multilateral assistance institutions could develop strategies to help their assistance programmes give forestry objectives appropriate priority and emphasis.

7. As a part of the development of such strategies, countries and assistance institutions should review policies and practices aimed at non-forest objectives in order to coordinate and integrate them with forest objectives.

B. Specific potential actions

8. The following are specific potential actions which fall into the three categories described above - inventory and research, education and training, and strategies for improving forest management. They are listed under the headings for specific principles relating to particular forest concerns.

Sustainable management

9. Undertake, as a general obligation, to develop and publish explicit national strategies for improving forest management.

10. Undertake, as a general obligation, to review major national policies and actions for their impacts on forests.

Conservation of forest diversity

11. Support a cooperative international effort to develop ways to measure and monitor biological diversity, to do research in support of the conservation of forest diversity and to provide technical and financial assistance to these efforts. Biological diversity encompasses diversity of species, habitats, and ecosystems. Additional work is needed to improve understanding and measurement of these factors.

12. Expand existing efforts to integrate biological diversity goals with multilateral and bilateral development activities.

Climate change

13. Support an expanded international cooperative programme of research into:

(a) The potential impacts of climate atmosphere change on forest productivity, health and diversity;

(b) Development, demonstration and enhancement of forest-based technologies that are economically sound while reducing further growth in net emissions of greenhouse gases;

(c) Development, demonstration and enhancement of technologies and practices to increase and enhance natural sinks of greenhouse gases;

(d) Development, demonstration and enhancement of technologies and management practices that will aid forest managers to adapt to climate and atmosphere change, while maintaining forest productivity, health and diversity;

(e) Development, demonstration and enhancement of technologies that use the potential of forests to provide an environmentally acceptable substitute for non-renewable energy sources.

14. Support an expansion of current international science, technical assistance, training, education, and fire management cooperation with a goal of reducing the destructive loss of forest resources to fire and a goal of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases from forest and savannah fires.

Air pollution

15. Initiate a cooperative effort with countries with temperate and boreal forests to understand the effects of air pollution on forest productivity, health and diversity; to assess the damage to such forests from air pollution; to determine likely causes; to establish monitoring systems; and to evaluate restorative actions.

Reforestation and rehabilitation

16. Support through an appropriate international institution an inventory and assessment of deforested lands to help countries identify those lands that would produce the highest economic and other benefits from afforestation. Both lands recently deforested and lands deforested in the longer-term past could be evaluated using satellite imagery and on-the-ground assessment.

17. Take steps, domestically and through cooperative international arrangements, to enhance the quantity and quality of boreal, temperate and tropical forests.

18. Cooperatively assess the kinds of government policies and arrangements that discourage or encourage conversions of forest lands - tax structures, forest and agricultural incentives, land tenure arrangements, leasing or contracting procedures for harvest, and so forth.

19. Cooperatively expand technical and managerial assistance to developing countries to assist them in restoring degraded lands and their associated natural processes. Aid in developing sustainable multiple-use management plans, developing appropriate policy, legislation and administrative management plans.

20. Encourage public/private initiatives such as the Central America and Mexico Coniferous Resources Cooperative (CAMCORE). This international association of private companies, academic institutions and government agencies has the specific mission of preserving the genetic resources and economic potential of relatively little-known tropical coniferous tree species.

Inventory and research

21. Support a cooperative, international inventory programme:

(a) To develop improved forest inventory and monitoring criteria and techniques;

(b) To carry out an inventory of the world's forests, on a continuing and regular basis, assessing their:

(i) Sustainable capability to meet demands for forest products, services and non-market values;

(ii) Health;

(iii) Biological diversity, including species, habitat and ecosystem diversity;

(iv) Deforestation rates and patterns;

(v) Ecological changes;

(vi) Other current and projected changes, including conversion to other uses;

(vii) The effects and sustainability of forest management practices.

22. Initiate new international cooperative research programmes on tropical forests, agroforestry, sustainable development, forest diversity, forest health management, temperate forests, boreal forests, and reforestation of deforested and degraded forest lands. Proposals could include:

(a) Expanded emphasis on forest research in existing research centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR);

(b) Establishment of new regional forest research institutes under CGIAR (the United States could express interest in cooperating in the development of a tropical forest research centre in Latin America in the Amazon basin);

(c) Increased commitment to support tropical forest research in existing institutions such as the Institute of Tropical Forestry, Puerto Rico, the Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry, Hawaii and the tropical woods programme at the Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, WI;

(d) Identification and evaluation of key leverage variables: factors such as timber prices, food prices, taxes and subsidies, tariffs, property rights, air pollution and others that critically affect forest resource use;

(e) Establishment of a boreal forest cooperative programme to expand and coordinate research to assess resources, monitor productivity, health and diversity of ecosystems and evaluate sustainable forest practices for boreal forests;

(f) Advanced work in the valuation and comparison of multiple forest benefits, such as commercial forest products, non-forest products such as agriculture, fuelwood, pharmaceuticals, biodiversity, indigenous peoples' homelands and ecological services.

Education and training

23. Support in close coordination and cooperation with the network of regional forest research institutes and other ongoing international programmes, the development of a programme of formal and technical training designed to assure that all countries with forest resources have the institutional capabilities and access to the most up-to-date scientific resources, information and capabilities needed:

(a) To manage their forest resources in an economically and environmentally sound manner at the governmental level;

(b) To provide their farmers, agroforesters, and other non-governmental resource users with the extension services, technical assistance and other knowledge needed for sound use of forest resources.

Financial and technical assistance

24. Review bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes with a view, inter alia:

(a) To improve the long-term health and productivity of forest resources for the production of employment, income, forest products, services, recreation and habitat;

(b) To developing and publishing explicit strategies which give appropriate priority to projects or aspects of projects which focus on the sustainable use of forest and land resources to meet human needs for food, fuel, shelter and economic development;

(c) To ameliorate the adverse effects on the health and productivity of forest and land resources from other economic development projects.

25. Provide an international institution to coordinate information on debt-for-nature swaps by identifying swap opportunities and partners, drafting model agreements, brokering transactions and generally assisting countries and non-governmental organizations in such arrangements.

26. Look to the Global Environmental Fund of the World Bank as the source of funding for environmental improvements in the world's forests.